years Is uncertain, but we can hardly cloubt that the period was determined by astronomical considerations. According to one view, It was based on the observation of Saturn's period of revolution round the sun, which is, roughly speaking, thirty years, or, more exactly, twenty-nine years and one hundred and seventy-four clays.[1] According to another view, the thirty years' period had reference to Sinus, the star of Isis. We have seen that on account of the vague character of the old Egyptian year the heliacal rising of Shins shifted its place gradually through every month of the calendar.[2] In one hundred and twenty years the star thus passed through one whole month of thirty days. To speak more precisely. It rose on the first of the month during the first four years of the period : It rose on the second of the month in the second four years, on the third of the month in the third four years ; and so on successively, till In the last four years of the hundred and twenty years it rose on the last day of the month. As the Egyptians watched the annual summer rising of the star with attention and associated it with the most popular of their goddesses, It would be natural that Its passage from one month to another, at Intervals of one hundred and twenty years, should be the occasion of a great festival, and that the long period of one hundred and twenty years should be divided into four minor periods of thirty years respectively, each celebrated by a minor festival.[3] If this theory of the Sed festivals Is correct, we should expect to find that every fourth celebration was distinguished from the

rest by a higher degree of solemnity, since it marked the completion of a twelfth part of the star's journey through the twelve

text is lost, the demotic version of the words is "master of the years of the Sed festival." See R. Lepsius, *op. cit.* pp. 161 *sq.*; W. Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, No. 90, line 2 (vol. i. p. 142); A. Letronne's theory (R Moret, *op. at.* 260. However, the kings appear to have sometimes celebrated the festival at much shorter intervals, so that the dates of its recnrrence cannot safely be used for chronological purposes. See Meyer, *Nachtrdge zur agyptischen Sinai^* pp. j'j6 *s$<f.).*

Chronologie (Berlin, 1908), pp. 43 *stj.*
(Abhandlungen der konigl. Akadcmic der Wissenschaften votu Jahre 1907);
*id., G&schichte dcs Altertums^* i. 2.
pp. xix. 130.
This was Lepsius, *op. cit.* p. 163).
bee above > PP- [2]4 W-» 34 *sqq.*
[3] This was in substance the theory of Biot (R. Lepsius, /.<:.), and it is the view of Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie {*Researches in*